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16 September 1954

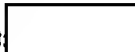
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GENERAL

1. Soviet military aid program for Afghanistan reported:

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The USSR has established a military aid program for Afghanistan, according to

[redacted] who received this report from the [redacted]

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[redacted] The money--equivalent to \$5,000,000--will be spent primarily for Czech weapons and an "unknown portion" will be used to build factories for producing military equipment.

Comment: On 22 August, Czechoslovakia extended a \$5,000,000 long-term credit to Afghanistan for Czech products and some industrial construction. The American embassy in Kabul also reported on 5 August that the Afghans were negotiating for an unspecified amount of Czech small arms, automatic weapons, artillery shells and light tanks, probably on credit terms. The [redacted] report probably was based on rumors of these negotiations.

Since the close of World War II, the USSR has given no direct military aid to any non-Communist government,

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2. Comment on Soviet Foreign Ministry's statement on SEAP:

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[redacted] The Soviet Foreign Ministry's attack on the Manila Conference and the Southeast Asian Pact places the official seal of approval on propaganda dealing with these topics which emanated from Moscow both before and after the conclusion of the Manila Treaty on 9 September. This mildly worded pronouncement is designed to force changes, or at least indecision and inaction, in the policies of the countries which have signed the treaty or might do so.

The fact that the statement was made by the Soviet Union rather than Communist China, which is more directly

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involved, makes it noteworthy as another expression of the USSR's pre-eminent role as the leader of the Communist movement.

The statement appears to be intended specifically to undermine support for SEAP in Southeast Asia by arousing fears that the 'non-Asian' Manila pact is an incursion of colonialism in a new form. Through other media the USSR has already pointed out that SEAP, like EDC, must be ratified to become effective.

The statement is also designed to discourage any other Colombo powers from adhering to the pact. The statement attempts to exploit Prime Minister Nehru's hostility toward SEAP and points to the Sino-Indian and Sino-Burmese 'nonaggression' declarations in late June as the guiding principles for security in Asia.

[REDACTED]
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4. Laos refuses to help remove Vietnamese from Thailand:

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[REDACTED] The Laotian foreign minister informed the American chargé in Vientiane on 11 September that his country would neither "take back" the 60,000 Vietnamese refugees in northeast Thailand nor permit them to travel across Laos to Vietnam. He suggested sea transportation as the most feasible means of repatriating the Vietnamese.

Comment: Thai, Vietnamese, and American officials meeting in Bangkok on 21 August agreed that the repatriation of the refugees was a matter of urgency and that the participation of Laos in a joint operation would greatly facilitate their removal. Failure to obtain this support would mean that any evacuation would have to be accomplished either by airlift or by rail to the embarkation port of Bangkok, which would severely tax Thailand's resources.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Comment on Nasr regime's deteriorating relations with Moslem Brotherhood:

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[REDACTED] The Nasr regime's decree on 13 September that in future the Egyptian government will write all Friday sermons used in the mosques throughout the country climaxes the recent deterioration in the regime's relations with the Moslem Brotherhood and suggests that serious clashes with this extremist religio-political group may be imminent.

The decree follows an increasing number of open clashes during the past three months between the Brotherhood and the regime at Friday services. The government has only lately

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announced such incidents and tends to minimize the casualties.

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The Brotherhood and the regime have now apparently emerged from the period of uneasy armed truce which began in March, and a contest of strength is likely to follow. This fanatical organization has an estimated 500,000 members and cells throughout the Arab world. With a tradition of terrorist action, it is capable of seriously harassing the regime.

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LATIN AMERICA

6. Comment on Chilean president's request for extraordinary powers:

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President Ibanez' request of 13 September to the Chilean Congress for extraordinary powers for six months because of the "moral disintegration of the country" may be the first step toward a dictatorship. The powers requested would allow the executive to censor the press and restrict the right of assembly, to make arrests without warrant, and to reorganize any government agency whose workers strike.

Ibanez lacks a majority in either house of Congress, where there is already strong opposition to his request. On 31 July, he told Ambassador Beaulac that if Congress refused any request by him for special powers to combat critical economic and political problems, he would dissolve it and rule by decree.

Striking copper workers have defied a back-to-work order issued by the government. The government is now conscripting workers and has announced that those refusing to work will be court-martialed.

Meanwhile, the Chilean Workers Central, which includes all important labor unions, has threatened to call a nationwide strike if Ibanez is granted special powers, or if any copper workers are detained.

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